

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: TOURISM

DATE: AUGUST 1, 2012

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

SUPERVISORS MERLINO
KENNY
DICKINSON
STRAINER
CONOVER
WOOD
VANSELOW

OTHERS PRESENT:

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR
PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PROMOTER
DANIEL G. STEC, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER

SUPERVISORS MASON

MONROE

THOMAS

MICHAEL R. SWAN, COUNTY TREASURER

CHRISTINA CURLEY, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE
REGIONAL CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU

DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*

THOM RANDALL, *ADIRONDACK JOURNAL*

DR. FREDD SENSER-LEE, PHD., BLOSSOMING ON THE BIKEWAYS, USA

CHARLENE DiRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 10:01 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Kate Johnson, Tourism Director, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Commencing the agenda review, Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$63,684 for a term commencing September 1, 2012 and terminating October 31, 2012 to print 250,000 copies of the 2013 Travel Guide. She noted the contract was resultant of an RFP (Request for Proposal) and Kenyon Press, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder. She pointed out the Travel Guide was 60 pages in addition to the cover and added that the cost of the contract was much less than the amount budgeted for this project. She mentioned that Kenyon Press, Inc. had printed the Travel Guide for the two previous years.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2012 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Courier Printing Corporation in an amount not to exceed \$3,490 for a term commencing September 25, 2012 and terminating October 26, 2012 to print 3,000 copies of the 2013 Group Travel Planner. She noted the Group Travel Planner was 44 pages in addition to the cover and added the cost of the contract was \$92 more than the amount budgeted for this project.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mrs. Wood and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Courier Printing Corporation as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form*

is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2012 Board meeting.

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. in an amount not to exceed \$4,058 for a term commencing September 7, 2012 and terminating October 19, 2012 to print 65,000 copies of the 2012/2013 Winter Brochure. She noted the cost of the contract was less than the amount budgeted for this project and Benchmark Printing, Inc. had printed the Winter Brochure in prior years.

Motion was made by Mrs. Wood, seconded by Mr. Strainer and carried unanimously to authorize the contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2012 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested authorization to submit a grant application to Empire State Development, Division of Tourism, for a Matching Funds Grant for tourism promotion. She commented that the amount awarded to Warren County the prior year was \$56,957.

Motion was made by Mr. Strainer, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to authorize submission of a grant application to Empire State Development as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 17, 2012 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson circulated a copy of the Warren County Tourism logo to the Committee members; *a copy of the logo is on file with the minutes.* Ms. Johnson noted the logo included the Tourism website address, VisitLakeGeorge.com, and was used on the website and in various print advertisements. She explained that the contract with the Glens Falls Civic Center included placement of the logo on the Civic Center floor and the logo would be placed off center. Mr. Strainer informed that during sporting events the cameras were placed on the south side of the floor; therefore, he suggested, the logo should be placed towards the north side in order to be more visible. Following a brief discussion, Ms. Johnson advised she would request placement of the logo on the Glens Falls Civic Center floor to be off center towards the north side.

Ms. Johnson informed there had been approximately 147,887 requests for information thus far for 2012. She thanked her staff for their professionalism in handling the incoming requests. Ms. Johnson circulated various magazines to the Committee members in order to familiarize them with the publications utilized for placement of advertisements.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that all of the print advertisements for the fall had been placed and Peter Girard, Creative Director, displayed samples of the summer and fall print ads for the Committee members. She mentioned that the fall print advertisements highlighted 2012 as the 40th Anniversary of the Adirondack Balloon Festival. She said the Fall Brochure had arrived and was currently being distributed.

Ms. Johnson reiterated that the 2013 Travel Guide had been reduced to 60 pages by consolidating categories. She noted the cost of printing and postage for the Travel Guide would also be reduced due to the smaller size and an overall savings of \$13,963 would be realized. She requested Committee approval to utilize some of the savings in order to purchase a new MAC computer for Mr. Girard's use at an approximate cost of \$4,500.

Motion was made by Mr. Conover, seconded by Mr. Dickinson and carried unanimously to approve the purchase of a new MAC computer for use by the Creative Director of Tourism.

A brief discussion ensued pertaining to the font utilized in the Warren County Tourism logo.

Ms. Johnson informed she was in the process of completing the August Newsletter to be released on August 21, 2012. She advised that the "I ♥ NY" Campaign and the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council had been hosting several events. She apprised the Empire State Development, Division of Tourism, had hired a new public relations firm, M. Silver, and had recently held some media marketplaces in Canada and New York City. She noted the marketplace in New York City offered an opportunity for each of the eleven New York State Tourism Regions to present a slide show and Warren County's presentation of the Adirondack Balloon Festival had been well received. Ms. Johnson circulated a list of the advertisers for the 2013 Travel Guide to the Committee members; *a copy of the list is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson apprised the Tourism Department received several requests for information, images, etc. on a regular basis. Recently, she continued, an email was received from a morning radio show host from Vermont requesting information pertaining to summer vacationing. She said the radio host had mentioned the Lake George Area on his show and had noted the VisitLakeGeorge.com website address four times during the clip. Mr. Girard played a clip of the radio show for the Committee members.

Ms. Johnson informed that she received Google Alerts and a recent alert had pertained to a CNN.com article entitled, 5 Hideaways that aren't the Hamptons, in which the Lake George and Adirondack Regions were mentioned; *a copy of the article is on file with the minutes.* Ms. Johnson reported her attendance at the NYSTVA (New York State Travel & Vacation Association) meeting in June which was held in Syracuse, New York. She reminded the Committee that she had been asked to join the Board of Directors for NYSTVA and noted the next meeting would be held at the end of August. She stated she had hosted the most recent Adirondack Regional Tourism Council meeting at the Warren County Municipal Center. She mentioned a Tourism Department staff member had been attending the meetings for the planning of the Bicentennial celebration. She commented that she was working with Leisa Grant, Principal Account Clerk, on the Department's 2013 Budget request.

Mr. Conover thanked Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, for her attendance at the Bolton Landing Re-enactment which had taken place in the Town of Bolton in June. He noted the event had been successful and pointed out how quickly the images of the event had been uploaded to the Warren County Tourism website.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Brand, who distributed copies of the Group Tour Update to the Committee members; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Brand informed that all of the advertising contracts had been received for the 2013 Group Travel Planner which would contain 44 pages and had six new advertisers, as follows: the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce; Adventure Family Fun Center; Hudson River Rafting Company; The Algonquin Restaurant; the Dockside Restaurant; and Travelodge. Four new itineraries had been developed, she continued, which included themes, such as: Haunted History; Experimental and Hands On Tours; Walking Tours; and a Shopping Tour. She said the cover of the Group Tour Planner would include an announcement that the Adirondack Balloon Festival had been selected as one of the Top 100 Events in North America for 2013 by the American Bus Association (ABA). She stated a new Group Tour Video was being created for use at shows and marketplaces and would be available for viewing on the Warren County Tourism website.

Pertaining to the ABA's Top 100 Events in North America, Ms. Brand explained, the awarding of the Top 100 Events had begun in 1982 as a way for motorcoach and tour operators to incorporate new

events in their itineraries. She said the honor gave events and the communities in which they were held an important boost in visibility. She advised she was allowed to nominate three events each year and she was pleased that the Adirondack Balloon Festival was once again selected. She said the types of events usually considered were festivals, fairs, commemorative events, parades, exhibits, etc. She informed that she had submitted the Adirondack Balloon Festival; My Summer Place: Georgia O'Keeffe Events and Activities; and the Last of the Mohicans Outdoor Drama.

Ms. Brand informed that the ABA Marketplace would be held on January 5-9, 2013 in Charlotte, North Carolina and Warren County and the Adirondack Region would once again sponsor the ABA Tour Operator Binder. She said solicitation for participation in the Binder would be distributed to all Warren County group tour properties during the upcoming week. She apprised the ABA Tour Operator Binder was distributed to over 350 Tour Operators who attended the ABA Marketplace.

Ms. Brand explained that FAM (familiarization) Tours were free or reduced rate trips offered to travel professionals to acquaint them with what a destination, attraction or supplier had to offer. She said FAM Tours were important because they created a tour experience, provided ideas for itineraries and provided an opportunity to build a relationship with tour operators. She informed of a recent FAM Tour by a representative of Audley Travel who had visited the Saratoga North Creek Railway (SNCR), the Sagamore Resort, the Boathouse Bed & Breakfast, the Holiday Inn Resort, Oscars Smokehouse and the Outlet Stores of Lake George. She said the representative had stayed overnight at the Georgian Resort and had taken a Dinner Cruise on the Lac du Saint Sacrement. She stated she had taken the opportunity to inquire about the level of business for the properties and the following businesses had reported that they had sold out on certain days recently: the SNCR; The Sagamore Resort; the Boathouse Bed & Breakfast; and the Holiday Inn Resort. She reported other FAM Tours were completed for Lowee's Tours and Solid Gold Travelers.

Ms. Brand announced that the Adirondack Regional Tourism Council's website, VisitAdirondacks.com, would be reformatted in order to update and improve the content on the Groups landing page. She said Ad Workshop would create an administrative component which would allow the partners to add, update and remove content on a regular basis.

Ms. Brand stated she was working on outreach to niche groups, such as sporting groups, youth groups and bank groups. She added this month she was concentrating on the East Coast Bank Club and had completed a mass mailing to over 500 Bank Club Directors. She informed of photo shoots conducted at the Great Escape's Girl Scout Day and the Bolton Landing Re-enactment.

Ms. Brand said she had assisted with staffing of the concierge table at the International Coleman Collectors Club Convention on June 28-29, 2012. She apprised that she and Ms. Johnson had met with Christina Curley, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Chamber of Commerce and Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB), pertaining to the monthly update of ongoing event promotion and partnership opportunities. She reported that she and Ms. Curley would conduct local sales calls to event and meeting sites. Ms. Brand mentioned that a mailing had been sent to 175 Group Leaders to inform of the Big Apple Circus event and dates. She reported that she and Ms. Johnson had assisted NYSTVA with an RFP for a location for their annual membership meeting and had received proposals from the Fort William Henry Resort, The Sagamore Resort and the Holiday Inn. She noted NYSTVA had selected The Sagamore Resort and would hold their annual membership meeting in October of 2012.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Mr. Girard who displayed recent email blasts, which had been released, to the Committee members. He said the Canadian email blast had been released to 5,600 specific Canadian email addresses. He noted the 4th of July email blast had been released to

approximately 123,000 email subscribers on June 27, 2012 and had been opened by approximately 6,000 people during the three day tracking period. He commented that the Outdoor Adventure email blast had been released on July 11, 2012 to approximately 125,000 email subscribers and had been opened by 20,708 people during the three day tracking period. The Out & About email blast, he continued, pertained to travel throughout the communities in Warren County and was currently in the process of being released.

Mr. Girard advised of a Photo Workshop he had attended recently and he displayed images taken following the Workshop to highlight the new techniques he had learned. He informed of his and Ms. Brand's attendance at a photo/video shoot and displayed golf, mountain biking and rock wall climbing images which had been taken during the shoot. He displayed golfing video taken during the shoot and noted the video appeared to be playing in slow motion due to the number of frames per second. He noted that many still photos could be derived from this type of video.

Mr. Girard displayed the recent website updates for the Committee members. He noted that the display of images had been improved to allow separate photo galleries specific to each landing page. He mentioned the Digital Balloon Brochure had been updated with two additional ballooning outfitters: Guru Balloons and Upstate Ballooning. A brief discussion ensued.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Ms. Curley who distributed copies of the CVB July 2012 Monthly Report to the Committee members; *a copy of the report is on file with the minutes*. She apprised that she and Ms. Brand would visit smaller venues in the County to determine if they would consider use by smaller conferences, meetings and social events. She said she had received several requests from small groups seeking venues for off-site dinners or meetings.

Ms. Curley informed that the Campground Owners of New York were looking for information on activities in the area during their November 2012 Meeting which had already been booked at the Great Escape Lodge. She advised she was working with PlayersChoice for a 2014 Girls Basketball Exposure & Evaluation College Showcase to be held sometime between April and June of 2014. She stated she had been working with the New York State Snowmobile Association for their 2014 Annual Conference. She said she was also working with the Thunderbird Club for a Kick-Off Weekend to be held May 11-13, 2013 in the Lake George Area.

Ms. Curley apprised of recent sales calls she had completed and listed the following organizations: the Independent Bankers Association of New York State; the Northeast Organic Farmers Association of New York; Delaney Meeting and Event Management; American Chemistry Council/New York State Chemistry Council; and Empire State College-Alumni Office.

Ms. Curley announced her registration for the TEAMS 2012 Tradeshow to be held in October in Detroit, Michigan. She noted she had sent out a number of leads and pointed out that the Report contained the current status of all the leads she was currently working on. Mr. Conover asked if feedback had been received from the participants of the Centurion Cycling Event and Ms. Curley responded that she had attended the wrap-up meeting where comments were made that the participants had been pleased with the routes for the cycling event. Ms. Curley noted the Centurion organizers anticipated that attendance would double for their 2013 event.

Pertaining to the Warren County Council of Chambers Report, Ms. Brand informed the last meeting had been held on June 14, 2012 at Martucci's Northern Lake George Resort in the Town of Hague. She said the the Guest Speaker had been Tim Hyland, of the Centurion Cycling Event, who presented an update on the Event which had been scheduled for the following weekend. A brief discussion ensued pertaining to the Centurion Cycling Event.

Mr. Merlino said the last item on the agenda concerned feedback on local tourism and Mrs. Wood distributed a packet pertaining to tourism in the Town of Thurman; *a copy of the packet is on file with the minutes*. Mrs. Wood stated that the Thurman Station Association, Inc. acted as the Town's Chamber of Commerce. She said the Town of Thurman held four major events each year, starting with Maple Days held in March. She added that Thurman's Annual Maple Sugar Party was held during Maple Days and benefitted the American Cancer Society. She mentioned the Party included donated food and was staffed by volunteers. She informed that last year Flat Stanley (a photo project held in area elementary schools) had toured the Town of Thurman and photos were taken. In May, she continued, the Annual Thurman Townwide Sale was held. She informed of the Monday Night Concerts & Market in the Park which were held at Veterans' Memorial Field in July and August. She stated the Thurman Fall Farm Tour was held in October, usually around Columbus Day Weekend. Mrs. Wood reported many small events were held throughout the year, such as Tour Thurman: A Guided Jaunt into Homes and History to be held Saturday, September 15, 2012 by the Thurman Historical Society.

Mr. Dickinson volunteered to provide feedback on tourism in the Town of Lake George at the next Committee meeting.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. Strainer and seconded by Mr. Dickinson, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 10:58 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist